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Rossini and his Operas "The Barber of Seville" and "Othello."

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Both operas were written in the same year (1816) at Naples; both hold a marked position, by their merit and success, among Rossini's works. And yet a position not so easily defined. There are few composers of Rossini's rank, who make it so difficult for criticism to determine periods of development in them, or discern turning-points of style and talent. Where with Rossini does the rosy morning of his talent end, and where the noonday height, the setting of the sun begin? With his *Tancredi* the youth of 21 was a celebrated man; his individuality seemed clearly stamped and fixed. He always remained the same, and yet grew always richer; with *The Barber*, *Othello*, *L'Italiana in Algeri*, &c., he made conquest of the world; with *Moses* and the *Siege of Corinth*, even of the French. Between these works again is always laid up something wholly insignificant and very short-lived; in each year Rossini shone once at the height of his full creative activity, and always in each year again relapsed into indifferent job work. Finally, he brought out the *William Tell*, the most remarkable card of leave-taking (*p. p. c.*) that a composer of Rossini's sort could leave behind.

In *Tell* Rossini's talent achieved not only its highest, but something altogether different from before; this work stands so isolated and peculiar in contrast with all his earlier efforts, that it is always tacitly excepted, when we speak especially of "the Rossini operas." And when, after years of silence, the now old maestro came out with a *Stabat Mater*, again his musical inventive faculty appeared as young as ever. And his style? It remained—always excepting *Tell*—both essentially and in outward particulars just what it always was. Changes in his style reveal themselves perhaps only to an eye sharpened by fond examination, yet they do exist and they seem interesting to us too. At first Rossini carelessly and joyously shook the rich tree of his talent; the blossoms raining down had the real unadulterated Italian, monotonously sweet orange blossom fragrance, such as breathes to us from many works of Cimarosa and of Paisiello. In this his first period (1809 to 1814) he wrote comic operas almost exclusively, and was peculiarly fond of farces; the only successful *opera seria* of these years was *Tancredi*. In the year 1814, Barbaja engaged the young composer for a series of years at Naples. New outward relations (to the impresario), and inward ones (his love to the Colbrand), here influenced his development, and weak as this influence may seem, it warrants our doctrinaire conscience in regarding Rossini's eight years at Naples as a sort of second period of his creative activity (1814 to 1822). Pledged by contract to write two new operas every year for Barbaja, Rossini became now more strongly impelled than he had been to serious opera. Besides Barbaja's preference, several outward cir-

cumstances may have contributed to this,—among others, the custom of making the *entrée* to serious operas higher than to comic.

A friend of Rossini's once expressed the suspicion that, had he come into the world as rich as Meyerbeer, he would never have composed any but comic operas. To us it seems more probable, that in that case he would have composed none at all. But the remark hits correctly the predominant tendency and talent of Rossini for lively subjects. The prima donna, for whom he had to write in Naples, was the beautiful Colbrand, absolute empress of himself and of Barbaja. Her voice, past its prime, was ill adapted for broad, sustained song; her delivery had plenty of virtuosity, but was without deep feeling, and so found its chief sphere in the ornamental and the brilliant. What wonder, if Rossini's music soon took on the physiognomy of his beloved? To write in her spirit, for her excellences, became the first law for Rossini, whose kindred nature served him all too well in this accommodation of himself. His music now assumes its pronounced tendency to the brilliant, the external, and becomes overloaded with embellishment. Who knows but what Rossini's talent, within its natural limits, would have assumed a deeper, warmer character, if the prima donna of his theatre and of his heart at that time had been named Pasta, instead of Colbrand?

Immediately after this Neapolitan period followed Rossini's triumphs in Vienna: his Italian celebrity had grown European. But world-celebrity and Paris are never to be thought of one without the other. The determining and characteristic feature of his last period is, in a word, the French influence. Under this influence appeared the *Siege of Corinth*, the *Moses* of that time, *Count Ory*, and *William Tell*; these in a certain manner form Rossini's third period (1825—1830). He has allowed French elements to influence him far less than his predecessors, Cherubini and Spontini, far less than his successors, Donizetti and Verdi; but he has not kept aloof from them. His countrymen remarked this French influence clearly enough; they scented it already in his *Semiramide* (1823), only they designated it as "*stilo Tedesco*" (German style)!

The merry *Figaro* and the wild *Othello*, then, are twin brothers in point of time. They even resemble each other more in form and features, than they willingly confess, or than they rightfully should in such a difference of position. An unjust fate has led the two handsome, amiable brothers in such different directions: pressing into the hands of the one the barber's basin, and of the other the field-marshal's staff! *Figaro* with his gifts and his culture was splendidly equal to his task; he has become the ideal of a barber and a prototype for comic opera. *Othello*, scarcely less gifted by nature, lacks the heroic energy, the manly earnestness for his vocation; his soul does not in the remotest degree possess the depth and passion, which can alone make such a fearful tragical end possible or conceiva-

ble. Of the excellence of "The Barber" scarcely a word more need be said. Yet an original want in Rossini manifests itself even here: the want of deep and sincere feeling. The music of "The Barber" is everywhere brilliant, fiery, genial, nowhere warm and inward. Look at Rossini's cool and toying aria; look at the stiff, overladen love duet in the second act. This cardinal want in Rossini's talent (the one of all his wants, which seems but weakly covered even in *Tell*) is only slightly perceptible in the merry, bubbling ensemble of *The Barber*; perhaps it even helps the unity of the picture. In *Othello*, on the contrary, we cannot get over this discrepancy between the subject-matter and the treatment; here the intrinsic coldness and emptiness, the trifling, glittering, prinked up show becomes intolerable.

We would not maintain that the composer had as little conception of the meaning of Shakespeare's tragedy, as had the poet who prepared his text for him, the Marquis Berio, well known for a good fellow and poor poet; but the power was denied to him, at all events, to find even a scanty expression for the tremendous import of "Othello." In respect of pure melodic invention *Othello* certainly belongs to Rossini's most luxurious productions; along with much utterly empty and long antiquated triviality, the opera contains very charming music. In point of dramatic worth, on the contrary, *Othello* is, in our opinion, greatly over-estimated. The overture is the introduction to an *opera buffa*; many numbers and passages of numbers, might, with a change of text, form ornaments to the *opera buffa*. The first two acts are sweet, brilliant concert music, nothing more; *Othello* self-complacent, proud as a peacock, Desdemona elegant and insignificant. In the third act Rossini as a lyric composer rises to a respectable height; in the grand scene of Desdemona the serious matter seems somewhat to have got the better of him. The short song of the Gondolier has a romantic twilight mood, which is one of the greatest rarities with Rossini. The song of Desdemona counts among Rossini's most beautiful inventions; here for a hundred measures long the seriousness of the situation is not interrupted by the tinkling bells of roudade. Unfortunately, the great duet with *Othello*, the acme of the tragedy, is again quite unworthy; the sovereign coloratur sets in again, and at Desdemona's painful cry: "*Non arrestar il colpo, vibrato a questo core*," the jumping *crescendo* motive from Don Basilio's *La Calunnia* air disports itself in the orchestra quite unrestrained. Admitting that *Othello* by its third act is superior, even in a dramatic point of view, to the five and twenty other lyrical tragedies of Rossini, still we cannot, apart from this comparison, follow a widespread critical tradition and recognize in *Othello* a music of soulful expression, of dramatic power and truth. Against a yet greater and more powerful majority of criticism, which in the development of music altogether only sees deterioration and decay (whereas every period, considered on

the whole, only ripens other faults and excellences), we may add the perhaps superfluous remark, that in warmth of invention, in truth and power of dramatic expression the best operas of Bellini and Donizetti, nay even some scenes of Verdi, undoubtedly surpass *Othello*.

E. HANSLIK.

Mendelssohn as a Power.

Mendelssohn as a composer was the great restorer of the beautiful things of past days. Of a faculty eminently delicate, of a perception marvellously acute, of a judgment never wrong, of an experience rarely equalled, of an education peculiar—because chiefly the result of his own feeling—and of notions of duty attending his mission, grand, noble, and godlike, he dealt with music as he dealt with his soul. Many composers have their two sides—the false and the true; Mendelssohn had no side—he was always *terres atque rotundus*; he was incapable of manufacturing false images for the pleasure of others, and to his own heart the thought of falsehood in work was revulsion to his nature. In his boyhood he lived and moved among MEN—not simply professors of music, but men—warriors in art—armed from head to foot for fight in the work, and bravely and cheerily spending their lives and their powers for the advance of its kingdom and its governance over the universal heart of man. No one knew better than Mendelssohn that for things to come right, the means to the end must be right. His communings with the works of the mighty dead stirred up his heart to thorough work, and when he stepped forth to the church, the theatre, or the concert-room, he stepped from light into darkness, from the bright, clear sunshine into yellow fog and impenetrable mist. As there was no heart, there was no heat; he found the musical world frost-bitten and ice-bound. Ever modest—nay, humble—and never truly conscious of the fiery strength of his own powers, he dedicated himself to the revival of the great thoughts of those from whom he had learnt all he valued and loved. He desired the whole artistic world to be a witness of his harvest from the seed-sowing of centuries, to rejoice with him, and to sympathize with his veneration and gratitude.

He was eminently a church musician by profession, inclination, study and practice. His heart's desire was to write worship music, and to be concerned in its welfare and improvement. This governing feeling gave his music that full meaning—that purity of thought, earnestness of purpose, and that high-mindedness of intention which marks and vivifies all he did. He could have nothing in common with Meyerbeer, who wrote for the satisfaction of Scribe and the edification of Paris. His works excited no interest in the French capital—there all his enthusiasm and energy were thrown away upon those who could only see in them a certain precision of expression, and an exquisiteness of arrangement, at that time thought quite unnecessary. He could have nothing in common with Berlioz; for here, though the brain was strong, the heart was calm and unmoved, and in stepping aside in search of novelty and variety the adventurer had altogether missed the path to right and real beauty, and to all that had any real hold upon humanity. To have walked with Wagner was to have blindly tottered down the rough and uneven steps which lead to darkness and destruction. He looked around for a brother of the same heart for church song as himself, and found he stood alone. There was no mass composer living. Europe had not a musician who was doing anything for the music of the highest of church offices. As to oratorios, Schneider was vanishing, and Marx's "*Moses*" was only known to and valued by its composer. Spohr had cast his bread upon the waters, but it was bread that soon turned, having little of the true qualities of wheat in it. The last chorus of an oratorio is commonly the best test of a composer's powers as well as of his moral purpose, and the last choruses of Spohr's oratorios could never move the heart of Mendelssohn. The things in these choruses are neither

new nor old. There was nothing here but a change, which led to the annihilation of all beauty.

Mendelssohn's first and chief labor was to put heart into music. From the inspiration of Seb. Bach he had learnt the nobleness and tenderness of really great writing, and his clear head, practised hand, and sympathetic spirit renewed the tones of the old prophet, and revived the zeal that had inspired his work. He caught up the spirit of the old Leipsic Cantor—it satisfied his own desires and longings—and passing by his subtleties, his never-ending dialectics, his deeply learned forms, Mendelssohn drew into himself the enthusiasm and affection which marks Bach's music, and so peculiarly renders it the music of the soul. But his new school was no mere echo of former days. All that he read and fed upon entered his spiritual life, and was developed according to the unaffected dictates of his own nature. He was no musician of the middle age, no miserable copyist of the subsequent organ giants; he had schooled himself into an individual expression, and matured a form which he claved to; and all that he read, and remembered, and used was passed through these two processes, and in this way became thoroughly Mendelssohnian. His vivid perception of the truth enabled him to fully grasp it, and in such a way as to make it afterwards his own personal revelation. In this way all his revivals assumed literally a new and natural existence, breathing all the freshness and charm of the young and living heart. As a pianist he used the old jewels in a way so felicitous and peculiar as to change the character of piano writing throughout Europe. Every pianist adopted, more or less, the old-new passages of the most captivating of piano players, and simply because it could not be helped—they were so beautiful and true. As organist he met the difficulty and supplied organ players with the new-old school music that could be heard with satisfaction on the organ of Silbermann's day, and yet gave full scope to the enticing varieties and combinations of the Cavaille-Coll instrument of his own time. He could treat the song with the grace of Schubert, the intensity of Beethoven, the terseness of Meyerbeer, the lucidity and yearning lovingness of Mozart, and combine all this with the poetical feeling of Handel, and the strange, tender, and grave solemnity of Sebastian Bach. His choruses—too vulgar [?] for Handel—too simple for Bach—somehow or other called up reminiscences of the enchanting freedom of the one, and the deep mysteriousness of the other. He had been talking with these mighty spirits, and it was the reflection of their long and full communings together.

The vivid perception and marvellous memory of Mendelssohn led him to the habit of an adaptability with reference to the thoughts of mighty dead that has in some degree affected his reputation as an original thinker. He is said to have possessed great imitative talent and to have fallen short of original truthfulness—that he modelled his symphony upon another, that his "psalmodes" were only interesting to the pious, and that his last oratorio—the "*Elijah*"—is wanting in invention, in dramatic vigor and real pathos,—that as real work it is overrated, unsound, and too feeble to withstand the hand of Time, the rudest but most just of all critics. The most dangerous of falsehoods is that based upon some atom of truth. Mendelssohn could take and did take the thoughts of others, but he had first made them his own. They had deeply affected his own being, and he desired it should be so with the whole world, for the whole world would be the better in participating in them. As a symphony writer he had not finished his course—in one sense not even begun it. His symphony called the Italian is every way below his position as a composer, and his Scotch symphony—by far his best—is not altogether even spiritually original. Of the movement to the *Lobgesang* the making up is painfully obtrusive, but pardonable by reason of its many excellences and its undeniable nobleness of intention. That his worship music is beloved and revered by the pious is to his credit. It demonstrates that herein was no hypocrisy, and that

he has appealed successfully to kindred spirits. Mendelssohn did not write for the wicked. Of the oratorio of the "*Elijah*" much might be said. It was written to satisfy its composer—and hence it must be good; but it was also written for England, *per order*, for a special purpose—a Birmingham Festival—for immediate effect—not as a model oratorio—not as the most perfect—and for these reasons the "*Elijah*" is not like the "*St. Paul*." And had the contemplated "*Christus*" been completed under the same circumstances it would neither have been perfect, nor a model, nor even, in our opinion, successful. The "*Elijah*" stands as a prophet—a forerunner—of one mightier than itself, and now that its dramatic composer has passed away—and his labors for this world have ceased—we accept it with gratitude and joy, and see in it all that is loving and good. The best things are not always seen in their best form, and the finer the diamond the more transparent the flaw.—*Orchestra*.

Otto Nicolai.

(Continued from page 299)

To the zeal of his father, and of his aunt Jeanette, as teachers, the little Nicolai was indebted for his great power and certainty of execution on the pianoforte. These formed the valuable basis of subsequent skill in composition and ability in treating the orchestra which distinguished him.

Even at this time, Nicolai exhibited a most astonishing mastery over his instrument, and was especially celebrated for his talent in playing difficult compositions at sight, but he was as backward in imparting expression, together with the proper gradations of light and shade, to the compositions he performed, as his tender age was behind a more mature period, capable of deeper sentiment. To his father, towards whom his loving heart continually attracted him, when this was at all possible, he now became exceedingly useful, by copying out a great deal of music, partly for his father's lessons, and partly for the Vocal Union. But the intolerableness of his position increased with the development of his intelligence. To this development of the feeling of his own value, the instruction given preparatory to his confirmation contributed not a little. There were hours when he felt bowed down by his supposed burden of sins, and actually began to believe in the bad disposition with which he was continually reproached at home. But when, on such occasions, he approached his father, in a spirit of confidential humility, he was frequently repulsed with hateful severity and scorn. Then, however, his heart would swell with a spasm of pride, and the desire he had long entertained to escape from such treatment and seek his fortune by his own exertions, became his favorite idea, a plan, a fact. Though ignorant, almost to simplicity, of the actual details of real life, he felt within him the power to work his way through whatever difficulties might assail him, especially since he possessed an accomplishment, the like of which, as he had frequently heard, had paved the way not alone to fame but to wealth; his pianoforte-playing. He no longer needed, as he rightly thought, to exchange, as formerly, the few little things he possessed for food, because a well-filled concert room would always supply him with the means of existing free from care for weeks together. With such ideas his feeling of independence increased; and with it, his courage, while from the latter sprang the resolution to flee and the carrying out of that resolution. He had not thought of the inconveniences to which he might be subjected, and of the obstacles which might be placed in his path by others, especially the police. This proves the carelessness with which, after having again suffered fearful corporal ill-treatment, for which he had almost longed, from his father, in the beginning of June, 1826, without legal papers of identification, without money, without provisions, and with no clothes but those he had on him, he quitted Königsberg, not to visit it again till after many years, and not till, moreover, he had become celebrated as a composer.

Nicolai first directed his steps to the little town in West Prussia, where his mother resided after her separation and before she removed to Breslau. He thought that with his profession he might easily support both her and himself there. The journey thither cost the poor wayfarer much patience and many a sigh of pain, when he had to go on continuously walking, and no compassionate *waggoner* gave him a lift for a part of the distance on his slowly advancing vehicle. In the villages he traversed, he appealed to the hospitality of kind-hearted peasants, but more especially to that of the "Cantors" and schoolmasters, though he passed, also, many a night in the luxuriant meadows, or in the silent darkness of the forest. In this manner, alone with his sensations, and with no living being to congratulate him, he spent his sixteenth birthday, the 9th June.

At length, after wandering across the country for many days, he reached his goal, being received by his mother, who was at first much alarmed, with genuine cordiality. But it was now that poor Otto first saw his chimerical hopes dispelled. The concert he intended to give proved a failure, in consequence of the want of credit attending his extreme youth, the time of year, which was unfavorable for such entertainment, and, above all, the absence of aught like interest evinced by the snobbish inhabitants, for everything immaterial. His mother was too poor to support more than one person—his sister—and thus, after a few days, poor Otto was once more compelled to grasp his traveller's staff, and seek for better fortune in a larger town, Stettin or Berlin, for instance. As he had hitherto journeyed so did he set out again, with this difference, however, that this time he had no defined goal in view, and that, after his first bitter experience, the thermometer of his courage had fallen some degrees. But the fatigue of his wearisome journey now began to exert its evil results, and it was nearly tired to death that he reached a village near Stargard, in Pomerania. The clergyman of the place, who not only read the touching story of the Good Samaritan in the Evangelist, to explain it to his congregation, but corroborated it by his own example, took pity on the poor exhausted boy, and by restoratives recalled him to life. Invigorated by meat and drink, the unhappy sufferer, passing over in silence the circumstances connected with the footing on which he stood towards his father, narrated his travelling adventures and his intentions to his kind host, and begged the latter's advice. The clergyman shook his head, it is true, on hearing the strange story, but directed his guest to apply to Herr Adler, an Auditor, in the neighboring town of Stargard. This gentleman, by his active and disinterested love for art, had acquired an excellent reputation in the town itself and the neighborhood. By his description of Herr Adler's agreeable character, the clergyman revived Nicolai's sinking courage. Doubly invigorated by his newly revived hopes, Otto managed to leave at once and hasten to this Meccas of art. It was only with difficulty that the worthy host succeeded in so far damping the youthful fire flashing up in Otto's bosom, as to prevail on him to accept a night's lodging now doubly necessary and beneficial to him. So it was not till the next morning that the boy left with thanks and blessings.

Quickly carried to the town by the vehicle in which the good clergyman had procured him a ride, Nicolai immediately sought out the Auditor's house. He did not, however, find Herr Adler at home, for the latter, according to his practice of an afternoon, had gone to the *Gesellschaftshaus*, the resort of the leading inhabitants. The young artist presented himself to him there, and, after a short introduction, asked him to do nothing more nor less than get up a concert for him. Herr Adler scanned, in astonishment, the pale but bold features, and the somewhat shabby habiliments of the applicant. At length, he kindly invited him to come and take a cup of tea in the evening at his house and go more into the matter.

At the appointed hour, Nicolai made his appearance, and, as a matter of course, was at once asked to give a specimen of his professional skill.

To the astonishment of everyone, he stated that he did not play from memory, adding, on being further questioned, that his music, his legal papers, and his things, would very soon be sent after him from Königsberg. Herr Adler happened to have none of the compositions mentioned, and Nicolai made up his mind, therefore, to play one of Hummel's Pianoforte Concertos at sight, and did so with marvellous dexterity, but without the faintest tinge of feeling or delicacy. Herr Adler, however, thought his execution sufficient to justify him in extemporizing a musical evening, which brought in a sum of money, trifling it is true, of which he took charge for his *protégé*. Not contented with this, he hired a small room for him in the house of a widow, and introduced him to the highly respected family of Herr Kretschmer, a *Regierungs-Rath*, in whose son, subsequently, the admirable painter, Nicolai quickly found a friend and comrade, whom, thanks to a lucky chance, he afterwards unexpectedly met again far from home and after a separation of years. Furthermore, Herr Adler sent him, in his own carriage, to the towns in the neighborhood, such as Soldin, Arnswalde, and Pyritz, where he played in the houses of Herr Adler's art-loving friends, who made a collection among themselves, which was conscientiously given by Nicolai to his fatherly patron.

Any one would have been justified in believing that Nicolai's livelihood was now secured at least for some time. Supported by a high-minded patron to the best of his powers, he could not have failed being materially successful. He would soon have settled down in regular employment, and his very great talent for teaching, which never deserted him at any period of his career, would have been still more developed among his pupils, though, it is true, at the expense of other and far more important qualities slumbering within him. Such, at any rate, would have been the normal course of a life, the account of which we might then have soon closed. From such a prosaic existence, however, Nicolai was preserved by his genius. The stream of his life was destined to first spread and fertilize, and then, brilliantly and brightly, to flow into eternity, and not be lost unobserved in the sand.

The very next event was to exert an influence upon his future. One morning, an exceedingly short time after his arrival in Stargard, Nicolai, pale and nearly breathless, rushed to his fatherly friend, and hastily begged for his little savings, saying he was obliged to start for Stettin at once. He evaded with equivocal answers all the kind questions put to him, and merely assigned as his motive the purpose of giving concerts at Stettin. In vain were the warnings of Herr Adler, who, tired at length with his fruitless efforts, handed him, not without just displeasure, his money, with which Nicolai, after hastily expressing his thanks, quitted the house. Scarcely had he done so, ere his landlady, also, rushed into Herr Adler's room, exclaiming: "Where is Nicolai, the rascal? He has run away; he has not paid his bill, and has burnt his bed!" Unable as yet to form a clear idea of the case, but fearing that, if he did not bestir himself, it might come before the authorities, Herr Adler sent the enraged woman to the place whence the coaches started for Stettin, with the imperative command for Nicolai to return, and a promise that, if he did so, he should escape punishment and be forgiven. Upon the strength of this, the young deserter made his appearance. After Herr Adler had got rid of the landlady by undertaking to become responsible for all the damage done, he demanded from Nicolai a faithful account of all that had occurred. Nicolai now confessed that, on the previous day, he had taken too much punch with Kretschmer, and, by some accident he was totally unable to explain, had set fire to his bed at home and scarcely succeeded in escaping with his life. To the question: why he had not paid for his bed, and, by so doing, better vindicated his character for honor, he replied: "he knew very well he could never get together sufficient to replace a bed, which, according to his ideas, must cost 100 thalers." Despite the seriousness of the matter, Herr Adler could not suppress a smile at such

simplicity, but now insisted upon the truth as to the non-appearance of the luggage, music, and papers of legitimization, as it was only the respect for his appointment as an Auditor which had hitherto preserved him from an otherwise inevitable conflict with police. Nicolai then humbly confessed that he had run away from his father, on which he was given to understand that, under such circumstances, he could not be protected and must go back home. On hearing this, the youth with burning face and sparkling eyes tore open his waistcoat, pulled off his shirt, and, pointing to the marks still evident of the barbarous treatment he had endured, declared, with a determination unusual at his age, "that he might certainly be compelled to return, but it would be only to fling himself into the water." Moved by his wretched fate, Herr Adler promised he would still interest himself for him, and do what he could to assist him in his trouble. In the first place, he took him into his house, and wrote to a friend in Königsberg to get Nicolai, Senr., to give him the entire charge of the boy. He furthermore caused Otto to take lessons in the sciences, and, as he had not been confirmed, to attend the clergyman's preparatory course of lectures. Meanwhile, the necessary papers of legitimization arrived from Königsberg. Among them was the eagerly desired *Freibrief*, or letter of manumission, so to speak, by which the father gave up from that time all his rights over his son. We may mention here that a touching letter was afterwards received from Otto's mother in Breslau, wherein she tendered her most fervent thanks to her son's noble-minded patron, and invoked the blessings of Heaven on his head. Nicolai, Senr., did not remain long after this in Königsberg. After 1830, he resumed his business visits to Insterburg, Gumbinnen, Graudenz, and other small Prussian towns, for the purpose of pushing the sale of his *Pianoforte School*.

The less the concern of the father had been at separating entirely from his son, and the less the fatherly feeling he had manifested for him, the greater became in a short time the affection entertained for the boy by his new protector, who did all in his power to fill up the deficiencies existing in every branch of Otto's education. The result was that the youth received regular scientific instruction; his morals gained, from his confirmation, together with good precepts and example, a steady support, while his taste for sociability and elegant manners was vigorously fostered by his intercourse with the most esteemed families in the town. Under these favorable circumstances, Otto's musical talent became, to Herr Adler's intense satisfaction, strongly and undoubtedly prominent. The worthy man considered himself bound to take measures for its proper artistic development, though this involved the heavy necessity of separating from one who had now grown so dear to him, but who required, to perfect himself in the higher branches of his musical education, to reside in a large town, the meeting-place of the representatives of every department of the art. In the highest acceptance of the words, this was true, at that time, of Berlin alone; so Herr Adler resolved to send his *protégé*, with strong letters of introduction, to the capital. The sum which the concerts he had still continued to give had brought in for Nicolai, Herr Adler made up to 200 thalers, with which, together with his best wishes and blessing, he sent the young artist forth, after having made him give his word not to adopt the uncertain career of a virtuoso, which would have required a much greater degree of development, but, by a thorough study and practice of theory, to ensure his material position. That Nicolai kept his word is well known, but it is not so well known what love and gratitude he always entertained for his first benefactor, and how he seized every opportunity of manifesting those sentiments. Thus Herr Adler was the first to receive, from the then popular composer, with the inscription: "To his fatherly Friend in Gratitude and Love. Otto Nicolai. July 1844," the portrait subsequently got up by the Philharmonic Society in Vienna. During a visit, also, that Herr Adler paid to Berlin at the time Nicolai wielded the conductor's staff in the

Royal Chapel and the Cathedral Choir, the musician introduced him to a company of artists and lovers of art as his "real father."

(To be continued.)

Rachel and Ristori.

It is hard to believe that it is now eleven or twelve years since the excitement of the summer was the expectation of Rachel. She was to come early in September, and in the absence of wars or rumors of war, the gay loiterers at Newport and Saratoga, and Sharon and Lebanon, and the White Sulphur Springs and the White Mountains, and wherever else their glittering was seen, had that new zest to the old pleasure, and forgave the early coming to town since it might be made only a delightful excursion from which they could return with sparkling memories and eager mouths.

Punctual to the time Rachel came, as three or four years before Jenny Lind had come. But there was nothing in the fame or story of the actress which could arouse the enthusiasm that greeted the singer. That vast moral welcome of which we have formerly spoken as awaiting Jenny Lind could not possibly salute Rachel. However supreme the actress might be, the popular conscience looked askance at the woman. Besides, she spoke French only. Her audience must necessarily be limited and half foreign. There might be great admiration of a select circle, but there could not be universal popular delight.

The pleasant September evening of her first appearance came. The pretty metropolitan theatre was full of a choice and curious audience, the mass of which was undoubtedly American, only partly familiar with the French language. They sat with the book of the play—it was Corneille's "Les Horaces"—and patiently awaited the rising of the curtain. Presently the prompter touched his bell and the stage was revealed. Its formality and severity, even to bareness, was the first impression. There were the two regulation arm-chairs, a general, faint, feeble hint of "classical" rigor, and a premonition of a drama in which the "unities" and the conventions were painfully prominent. But before the impression was very clearly defined a figure, exquisitely draped, of the severest symmetry, a form of tragic grace, not full to ripe queenliness but of a royal maiden, glided upon the scene with a face so pitiful and wan that its overpowering woe put every mind in key for the tragedy.

But Rachel herself was more tragical than any part she played. Her genius seemed to be as exceptional to her whole character as a fine voice. She was already stricken with mortal disease when she came; but the poor girl of the Boulevards, the slight singer at the cafés a few years before, burned to be the sovereign of two worlds, as she proudly declared. She could not know what she had undertaken. How could she, whose chief weapon was speech, hope to subdue those who could not understand her? Her tones, her movement, her superb taste might be acknowledged, but even actual passion in a foreign tongue is strange, feigned passion may be even ludicrous. Rachel could not but feel acutely that her American career was not a triumph, was not exactly a success. And she was mortally ill when she became conscious of it! And she had crossed the sea to confound and conquer the barbarous Yankees, and they were not subdued! They were not averse, they were not unkind, ungenerous, or unintelligent. On the contrary, they were ardently eager to be enthusiastic, and she who had illuminated Europe with the blaze of her genius turned it upon them, and they smiled and hoped but were not warmed. How truly that wan, piteous face, that wasting figure, that low voice which vibrated through the hearer, that hollow cough which destroyed the sad illusion by a sadder truth, told the melancholy tale of disappointment and despair. No one can recall those last and unhappiest days of Rachel without a willingness to draw a cloud of forgiveness over her wild and wayward life.

The expectation of this summer fortunately has none of these mournful aspects. Adelaide Ristori, who will be the September guest of this year, comes invested only with the most womanly and attractive associations. No longer young she is still in the gentle prime of her power, and brings to us the unworn and persuasive genius which did not shrink from the contest with Rachel when she sat crowned in her own capital. The gossip that Dumas or Jules Janin or Véron or some other proud Parisian resolved to show Rachel that fame could be made as readily as omelets, and therefore brought Ristori to Paris and puffed and applauded her into a great reputation, is worthy of Paris for its extravagance and folly. Paris is the worst place in the world to try such an experiment, for the Parisians are remorseless and spoiled. A hungry man may be duped with a painted dish, but not the victim of satiety.

It seems that Ristori was born near Venice in 1822. Her parents were strolling players, so that she began life in the theatre. When she was fourteen she played in "Francesca da Rimini," and in a very few years became the most noted of Italian actresses. Her beauty and her grace, with her winning genius, made her everywhere a favorite, and in 1846 Julio del Grillo, son and heir of the Marquis of Capranica, saw her, and loved her, and offered to marry her. The chronicler from whom we cull these facts of high romance informs us that the pride of the fine old Italian nobleman and of all his fine old family was aroused by the threatened degradation. Remonstrance was in vain. The affair took the course that it always does in the fine old English comedy. The lovers eloped and were married; then returned upon their knees, and were reconciled to the fine old people, who insisted that the Marchesa del Grillo—for such, says the proud chronicler, is the true title of Ristori—should remain at their villa, where she remained in seclusion for nearly two years. But the retirement was haunted and disturbed by the ghosts of former triumphs and excitements. She longed to return to the stage, for which her genius so peculiarly fitted her; and she again appeared at Rome, in 1848, in Alfieri's tragedy of "Myrrha." But the French were soon battering at the city, and Ristori left the theatre for the hospital; nor was it till 1850 that she returned to the stage, of which since the death of Rachel she has been the undisputed Queen.

In this country, of course, Ristori will play in the Italian language. As with Rachel, this must, of course, limit both her audience and their enjoyment. Yet her magnificent action, her womanly tenderness and passion, the pathos of the heart, will not fail of their effect. These are of no country, and appeal to the universal sympathy of humanity. Her coming assures us of a refined and profound artistic enjoyment. The "whole audience" may not "rise in a body," so deeply moved that the play for some moments cannot proceed; but their "overwrought feelings" may not find "an outlet in loud shouts, clapping of hands, wavings of handkerchiefs, and such tumults of applause as are very, very rarely witnessed in any theatre;" but they will certainly feel to their hearts that exquisite charm of true womanhood which is described as the crowning grace of Ristori.—G. W. Curtis, in *Harper's Magazine*.

Tonic Sol-Fa.

(From the London Athenæum.)

Transactions of the Tonic Sol-Fa School. Fifth Session, 1855-6. (The Tonic Sol-Fa Agency).

A more comical shilling's worth than this is not in our musical experience. The above coin at any given Casino enables the payer thereof to hear "The great Vance," or "The Cure," or some rather tiresome version of Herr Offenbach's newest Grecian, or Roman, or Romantic absurdity; but it will be as well invested by any musician who loves nonsense in the "Transactions of the Tonic Sol-Fa School."

There has never been any want of empiricism in the teaching of Music. But since the century came in the same has become rampant. To give two instances: Logier with his "Cheiroplast" (adopted by Kalkbrenner), so hardly hit by Lady Morgan in her *Crawley dinner* ("Florence Macarthy")—Colonel Hawker, the intrepid duck shooter, with his "Hand Moulds," conceived they had smoothed the way to "a short and easy" mastery over the keys of the piano-forte. "Where is either implement now?" The Studies of Cramer and Moscheles endure, whereas the machines for subjugating Nature have passed into the limbo of obsolete tortures. No one sits in stocks (it is to be hoped) at the time present with a view of his toes being turned out in the canonical positions of dancing.

Those, however, who overlook the "Tonic Sol-Fa School" have faith in their own Galimatias, and expect the staff and staves of musicians to study a new nomenclature, from which they will have to proceed to the old one. Here, to exemplify, is a scrap from the cover of this comical book:—

1. Major Chords.

1.	Da.	Fa.	Sa.	{ 8 5 or 5 or 3 3
2.	Dh.	Fb.	Sh.	{ 6 3 or 6
3.	Dc.	Fc.	Sc.	{ 6 4 or 4

The alphabet of music was arranged and has been completed many a year ago, and is not to be revolutionized by enthusiasts, who recall by their airs and grimaces the transactions of the folk who attempted to establish the *Phonetic Nuts*, and who threw away money, time, talent (a grain of genius, too perhaps),

on an attempt to show that two spelling-alphabets are easier to learn than one. But not merely is the musical notation dislocated; we have to learn a new polyglott jargon. Such descriptions as *Tonic Sol-faists*. "Postal classes," "Mr. Longbottom's Choral-voice training class," require a glossary for those who have not the "shibboleth." But the writers of these Transactions are, musically and orthographically, a peculiar people. Says Mr. Proudman, in his paper on "The Common Marks of Expression," "There is something deeper and higher which vocalists and orators must possess to make themselves felt as well as admired. While cultivating this soul-thrilling power," &c. The scholars are desired to take care "not to accent loudly the second pulse in the measure, as, for instance, the 'Lak' on the word good, Ex. 31, page 28, Standard Course." Then Mr. Proudman descants "on organ tones, or tones all of one thickness," on "staccatoed tones" on "laughing tones;" and thus closes his evidence:—

"If in drawing attention to these common things in musical expression, our execution becomes more correct and scholarly, we shall be the better fitted to illumine our performances with thoughts that burn, and with flashes of feeling, fire and fun, which shall stamp us as worthy students of a noble art."

Mr. Gardner's paper "On the Relation of the Tonic Sol-fa Method to the Old Notation" is not less clear and comical than the above; and mark the deduction from all his entangled paragraphs:

"In the discussion which followed, Miss Kenway said, that as a teacher she could not get on for one day without the old notation. For instrumental music it was at present indispensable. Mr. Dobson instanced a case in which by teaching the old notation he gradually succeeded in making his pupils see the superior advantages of the Tonic Sol-fa Notation. He thought we might often help Sol-fa by teaching the old notation."

Even Mr. Longbottom, who figures substantially in these "Transactions," declared that "in Scotland, he could teach in no normal school unless he taught the old notation." Mr. Griffiths, on the other hand, said that "in Lancashire, the mill-hands left the singing-classes so soon as the old notation was introduced; the music was too costly and troublesome." Mr. Dobson is weighty on the subject of instruction, and really holds that teachers who profess to teach ought to understand teaching. Pupils, which is more, are admonished that learners ought to learn. "Mr. Root, in the preface to his admirable 'Musical Curriculum,' says: 'May I be pardoned for hinting at the importance of learning music rather for the benefit and pleasure it may be to others than to feed and gratify vanity and self-love, since right views and corresponding motives will go far towards keeping the pupil in the right course, and practising in the right way.'" This is the very greenery of grass! But, later, Mr. Dobson throws some spirit and animosity into the relations of teacher and pupil, by declaring that "no teacher has any right to give his pupils that class of music which they cannot thoroughly appreciate and enjoy!" We had innocently fancied that the earliest steps in the art, such as scale-practice for voice and fingers, however salutary, were not peculiarly enjoyable. Then Mr. Dobson recalls with pride an uneducated minister in Melbourne, as under: "Although he was no musician practically, yet he stood up for Sol-fa wherever opportunity offered, and has been of good service to the cause in the Antipodes." Into the overcoming analysis of harmony, tendered by Mr. J. K. Starling, A.C. (which means Advanced Certificate), we will not presume to venture, having no clear idea of what is meant by "part-pulse dissonances," "horizontal forestroke," "waving tones," "the ray in the tenor," and other definitions. Mr. Proudman turns up a second time, with receipts showing how to make "a successful programme." He thinks (to give an example of his taste in arrangement) that "Home, sweet home," which appeals to sentiments at once pleasurable and sad, should be succeeded by a piece like the 'Moonlight Song of the Fairies,' rather than by the 'Tickling Trio.' The interposing 'Song of the Fairies' would prepare for laughter without pain, and prevent the hurrying away of emotions and sentiments which refresh and exalt the mind." We plead guilty to having heard some music; and therefore respectfully inquire, What is the 'Tickling Trio'? Neither are we acquainted with 'The Showman's Courtship,' by Artemus Ward. The Sol-faists poke about apparently in strange nooks and corners. The Rev. Mr. Curwen, who is the director of this Association, next testifies about stringed instruments. We submit the following specimen of his evidence to "counsel learned in the law." The curious experiments in acoustics of Prof. Helmholtz have set his wits "a-gadding." At least, every one would be glad to know what is meant by the passage we cite:—

"To deprive a tone of its harmonic octave would be a great impoverishment, but what if, by similar means (by hitting in the right place), you could deprive it of the sharp dissonant 'wiry' harmonics, *ta2 dg 13 mg*, which lie so close together by the third octave! Then surely you would have enough of fullness and all the richness without the hardness. That 'right place' for hitting on the modes of the dissonant harmonics is, according to the Professor's principles, the very same which the practical men have found out by accident."

Next testifies Mr. Bourke on "Figured Basses,"—and so darkly mysterious is his evidence that we will not here attempt to get behind the "seven veils." To this succeed Mr. Longbottom's paper "On the Use of Writing in Elementary Classes," and "the discussion, by request of several influential teachers, on the question of Mr. Curwen's claims as regards his copy-right in the tonic sol-fa notation." Where were the representatives of M. Emile Chévé, of Paris, who was to be heard of some twenty-five years ago, and who entered the lists of teaching class-singing by logarithmic notation, against Wilhelm, who, on his side, had only adopted and adapted the method of Nægeli, of Zurich—even as Mr. Hullah adapted and adopted Wilhelm's method for England? Mr. Kennedy's paper, "On the Extension of Instrumental Music among Tonic Sol-Fa-ists," is in the right key of a collection such as this. Mr. Proulman turns up, for a third time, as an exponent of "Music and Morality," and is fierce and sanctimonious, and, if sincere, very absurd. Mr. Evans speaks to "the training of boys' voices." Seeing that boys' voices change inevitably, it might be suggested, that whereas the musical training of boys could be made too complete, their vocal exercises might wait till such time as the settled organ for song presented itself. One would be glad to have the name of a single "marvellous boy" who has shot up into a great singer—Braham being the exception that proves the rule. Mr. Thomas Ryder (A. C.) is dismally stupid in his communication on the subject of Psalmody, and apparently disapproves of organs; on both subjects rebuked by Mr. Curwen. Next comes the rebuker's essay "On the Stops of the Harmonium," that cheap and shabby substitute for the glorious old organ. Stops more, or stops less, the "Harmonium" is only, at best, an economical makeshift for the great instrument, having generic peculiarities of tone which become to some ears intolerable. Mrs. A. T. Stapleton, another A. C., prefaces a long and amusing article "On Voice-Training by the Italian System," by declaring that "writing a paper is a task for which she is totally unfitted, having had a private education!" We shall merely give one or two valuable paragraphs:—

"Miss Glover—when I went on my visit of inquiry to Norwich, as to the comparative merits of the two systems (which I had Mr. Curwen's full approbation for doing)—urged me to use a Sol-fa Harmonicon in my classes, in order to cultivate purity of intonation, and softness of delivery of tone. She used one herself, and drilled her pupils to sing with it two years on twelve short canons. Thus she formed their voices, and very musical and soft they certainly became. In accordance with her advice, I purchased one, before I left Norwich, of Mr. R. Warne, who manufactured Miss Glover's, and commenced using it as soon as I returned home. But both my scholars and myself soon tired of it: for besides the annoyance of being treated as a dangerous fellow-traveller in every omnibus that I entered, with my suspicious brown-papered-baby-coffin shaped parcel, the children lost all interest in it, and as I could not force them to submit to such irksome drill,—like Miss Glover, who was almost the sole support of many of her pupils' education and future hopes in life,—I should soon have lost them from the class. The glasses also occasionally got broke, and we had to wait till the maker could find time and opportunity to send us new ones from Norwich, so that I was obliged to give up voice-training by Sol-fa Harmonicon."

The "Italian system" includes, according to Mrs. Stapleton, devices as suspicious as "the brown-papered-baby-coffin." Some professors make their pupils practise with half-a-crown in their mouths. Mrs. Stapleton "thinks a florin, or, if that is too large, a shilling, might be advantageously held between the teeth when a looking-glass cannot be used." Practising with a looking-glass in the mouth must be a "parlous" sport. We believe wedges have been used to give the mouth a good sit; and have even heard that the broad ample smile of Pasta, which no one can have forgotten that ever saw her receive the homage of her subjects, owed some of its charm to mechanical appliances.

Enough of this shilling's worth of empirical conceit. We may be thought to have devoted more time and attention to the matter than its folly merits; but we have too much respect for the noble art of

Music, to see it debased by the intrusion of quackery, without now and then offering our "screed of doctrine."

Music Abroad.

London.

HER MAJESTY'S THEATRE.—The season, which came to an end about the middle of last month with a series of "Farewell" performances at reduced prices," is thus summed up in the *Musical World*:

On the whole Mr. Mapleson's patrons have had little reason to be dissatisfied with his actual performances, from the 7th of April, the night on which his doors were opened, to the 10th of August, the night on which were closed. True, he has not revived the *Donna del Lago* of Rossini, in which Signor Mongini was to have made his first appearance; nor has he produced the *Vestale* of Spontini, whose operas, to quote from the prospectus, "have been unaccountably neglected in this country;" nor has he fulfilled his pledge with respect to M. Gounod's *Mireille*, in which the part of Mireille was put down for Mlle. Ilma de Murska, "for whom" (again to quote Mr. Mapleson) "the composer has expressly written several new pieces." Signor Mongini came out, not in *La Donna del Lago*—in the revival of which the manager informed us, "he had not only in view the beauty of the music, but the tried capabilities of his company for adequately representing it"—but in *Il Trovatore* (Ben Lomond to Primrose-hill); the opera of Spontini, inasmuch as its non-appearance was unaccounted for, remained "unaccountably neglected;" while the "several new pieces" of M. Gounod are still to be heard. Add to the foregoing the *Falstaff* of Otto Nicolai, which though promised with a new Falstaff (Herr Rokitsansky) and a new Fenton (Sig. Gardoni,) made no sign.

The promise about Meyerbeer's *Dinorah* was duly kept; Mlle. de Murska's graceful and very original impersonation of the heroine of this still lovelier pastoral—supported by the best Hoel and the best Corentin, in Mr. Santley and Signor Gardoni, that our stage has witnessed, by the delightful singing (later in the season) of Madame Trebelli-Bettini, as the Goatherd (for which character, at the Royal Italian Opera, Meyerbeer expressly wrote a new and beautiful air,) by a *mise en scène*, one of the triumphs of Mr. Telbin, and by a musical execution, orchestral and choral, conferring the highest credit upon Signor Arditì and his followers—was one of the most brilliant attractions of the season. Another important pledge was equally redeemed, in the production, for the first time, of Gluck's best Greek opera, *Iphigénie en Tauride*, which, as *Iphigenia in Tauris*, is likely to keep its place for a long period among the most solid supports of the Italian repertory. The performance of this fine dramatic work was in all respects admirable. It provided a new grand classic part for Mlle. Titiens, which, as in the case of *Medea*, a year earlier, once more directly invited public attention to her extraordinary ability. Moreover, it afforded Mr. Santley and Signor Gardoni as Orestes and Pylades equal opportunities of distinction, and M. Gassier in Thoas, another chance of advantageously exhibiting his versatile powers. In short, the distribution of the four chief characters could not have been more effective; while the rest of the musical performance was to match. Signor Arditì entered upon his task of preparing the opera of Gluck with as much zeal as he had already shown on behalf of the far more elaborate opera of Cherubini—and probably with the heartier goodwill, inasmuch as the ungrateful duty of adding accompanied recitatives of his own to a long accepted masterpiece was in this instance spared him. *Iphigenia* was also played three times; but those three occasions stand out nobly prominent in a retrospective view of the past season. As Mr. Costa made Gluck's *Orpheus* acceptable at Covent Garden, so Signor Arditì made Gluck's *Iphigenia* acceptable in the Haymarket; and it is now for either to try his hand on *Alceste*, *Armida*, or *Iphigenia in Aulis*. The revival of such works need in no way interfere with, as it can in no way imperil, the popularity of more modern operas; on the contrary, an agreeable variety is afforded which adds new zest to their enjoyment. Not less memorable, and for similar reasons, is the production (for the first time here in Italian) of Mozart's most genial comic opera, *Die Entführung aus dem Serail*—the opera of his youth and early enthusiasm, the smile that chased away tears, the sunshine that peeped out from behind the dark cloud of *Idomeneo*. This model of a comedy in music, as *Il Seraglio*, enchanted every ear, and protested emphatically against the indifference that had permitted it so long to lie on the shelf. Talk of "unaccountable neglect!" Here, if we will, is a glaring instance of

it. The music of *Il Seraglio* is as full of vigorous life as a young lion, as unclouded as the mind of a girl in her teens, who has known no grief nor can conceive it. Languishing as are the loves of Belmonte and Constanza, they are just as serenely happy as those of Blonde and Pedrillo, only they convey the aspirations of a pair of lovers who sigh for each other in a loftier and more refined sphere of feeling. Neither Constanza nor her devoted worshipper entertains the slightest doubt that all will go right, that they will escape from the Pasha and his watchful Osmin (of whom they stand in no fear,) whatever obstacles may stand in their way. But their confidence is the confidence of youth, and there is youth about the whole thing. The Pasha Selim is just such a tyrant as a boy might picture to himself, with a certainty that he can be more than a match for him; the formidable steward is something only to laugh at. And so it turns out in the opera. How Mozart has treated all this, how freshly, in what bright colors, with what springy youthfulness of touch, has been described already; and we must not be tempted further to dilate upon the theme. Nor is it requisite here to add one word to what was said at the time about the performance of Mlles. Titiens and Sinico, as Constanza and Blonde, of Dr. Gunz, Signor Stagno (a most promising young singer, who must endeavor to hold true to his promise,) and Herr Rokitsansky, as Belmonte, Pedrillo, and Osmin—or of Signor Foli, in the small part of Selim.

The several performances of *Il Flauto Magico* and *Oberon*, both of which had already formed part of the repertory, must be singled out as among the most interesting of the many interesting incidents of this operatic campaign. *Il Flauto Magico* brought back that thoroughly practised German singer Madame Harriers-Wippen, as Pamina; and one more competent to deliver with force and propriety the divine music which Mozart has put into the lips of his fire-and-water-proof heroine could not be named. Then it delighted us again with Mlle. de Murska's very remarkable execution of the great airs of Astridamante, and—not less welcome in its way—with the Papageno of Mr. Santley, which, however inferior in a sense of comic humor to the memorable impersonation of Ronconi, in a musical sense has never been equalled. Signor Foli, too, the young American bass, whose voice is so justly extolled, found an opportunity of displaying his artistic readiness by undertaking the part of Sarastro, High-Priest of Isis and Osiris, at the shortest possible notice (Herr Rokitsansky being suddenly "indisposed")—an opportunity of which he took such excellent advantage as to show himself incontestably one of the most useful members of the company. A livelier Papageno than Mlle. Sinico could not be imagined, nor a Tamino more thoroughly versed than Dr. Gunz in the German traditions of the principal tenor character of an opera which, according to Beethoven, was the most German, and therefore the most genuine, opera of Mozart. Certain deficiencies in the general performance of *Il Flauto Magico* have been pointed out; but these, like the nondescript Furies in *Iphigenia*, will doubtless be looked to in the interval between now and next season. About *Oberon*—in which the four leading characters were sustained by Mlle. Titiens (Rezia,) Madame Trebelli-Bettini (Fatima,) Signor Mongini (Hoon,) and Mr. Santley (Sherasmin,) who all take part in the glorious quartet, "Over the dark blue waters" (we prefer the original text of Mr. Planché,) in which Signor Bettini played Oberon, Madame de Maric-Lablache Puck, M. Gassier Babekan, and Mlle. Bauermeister the Mermaid—there is really not another word to say.

To complete the list of works for some mysterious reason termed "classical"—though not a bit more classical, if classical means universal, accepted as models, than the *Barbiere di Siviglia* of Rossini, which will live as long as *Le Nozze di Figaro* of Mozart, as long, indeed, as dramatic music is a public want—we have heard *Der Freischütz*, with Mlle. Sinico; *Fidelio*, to name which must suffice; *Don Giovanni*; a single representation of Cherubini's *Medea* ("classical," if anything is classical,) but recently spoken of at length; and the in almost every respect admirable revival of *Le Nozze di Figaro*—to which, for precisely the same reason, we are not called upon again immediately to refer. The other works have been *Il Trovatore*, with which worn-out *capo d'opera* the season commenced, and which was successively responsible for two failures—that of a French tenor, "Signor Arvini," in Manrico, and that of a German soprano, Mlle. Louise Lichtmay, in Leonora; the *Puritani*, in which Mr. Hohler made so successful a debut; *Lucrezia Borgia*, the second representation of which will be remembered as the occasion of the first and last of the "limited number of performances" accorded to Madame Grisi, in which Mlle. Titiens "has consented to" (but did not)

"take part;" *Faust* (the inevitable); *Martha*, with Mlle. Titiens and Signor Mongini—not so well suited as Mlle. Bettelheim, the Viennese contralto, and Mr. Santley; *Lucia di Lammermoor* and *La Sonnambula*, helping fully to confirm the impression created last year by Mlle. de Murska, and in the latter of which, on one occasion, Mr. Hohler (replacing Signor Mongini) showed himself at least as familiar with the music of Elvino as with that of Arturo; *Robert le Diable*—brought forward for the debut, as Alice, of Mlle. Celestine Arvini, a new French soprano, with an Italian name, who, neither in that nor in her subsequent essay, as *Pamina*, produced a very strong impression, and in which Signor Tasca played Robert, Mlle. de Murska the Princess, Signor Foli (again at a moment's notice) Bertram; *Les Huguenots* with its well-known cast, including Mlle. Titiens and De Murska as Valentine and Marguerite, strengthened by Signor Mongini's Raoul, Madame Trebelli's Urbain, and Herr Rokitsky's Marcel (both of which operas would probably be denominated "classical" by the advanced party in the politics of art music); *Il Barbiere*, with Madame Trebelli as Rosina, Signor Bettini as Almaviva, Signor Scalse as Bartolo (the best Bartolo, as he is the best Leporello, since Lablache), and M. Gassier as Figaro; Verdi's *Ernani*, with Mlle. Titiens, Signor Tasca, M. Gassier, and Mr. Santley in the principal characters—revised for a single performance (!); and, last not least, Rossini's *Semiramide*, to the effective assumption of the three leading characters in which—by Mlle. Titiens (*Semiramide*), Madame Trebelli-Bettini (*Arsace*) and M. Gassier (*Assur*)—a just tribute of acknowledgment was paid not long ago. The various representations from time to time of these popular operas filled up the intervals agreeably enough, and gave a fair place to the old-established "repertory" in the general transactions of a more than usually interesting season.

CONCERT OF MR. MOSCHELES.—The evening concert on Monday, in St. James's Hall, "for the benefit and relief of the sick, wounded, and sufferers of all nations engaged in the present war, in conjunction with the Ladies' Association established for that purpose," was a brilliant success. The attendance was very large, and we understand that nearly £500 were realized for the charity. The concert began with a performance on the pianoforte (Erard) by Mr. Moscheles, consisting of the *Etude* from his Op. 95, called *Reconciliation*, and the numbers in D minor, A flat, and G major, from his first book of *Studies*. Madame Parepa followed with the air, "Du village voisin," from Auber's opera, *Le Serment* (accompanied by Mr. Benedict). Then Mr. Moscheles played some new variations of his own upon the "Harmonious Blacksmith," which differ in all essentials from the old variations of Handel. Then Madame Lind Goldschmidt sang an air from *Der Freischütz*—"Und ob die Wolke Sie verhülle" (accompanied by her husband), and on being rapturously called back, repeated the last half of it. Then Dr. Gunz (Mr. Benedict accompanying) gave Schubert's *Lied*, "Der Neugierige" ("The Curious"). Then Madame Parepa sang Mr. Benedict's song, "The bird that came in spring" (accompanied by the composer). Then Mr. Moscheles extemporized at great length upon themes from the last three movements of Beethoven's Symphony in C minor, mixing them up with "See the conquering hero comes" (in honor of Count Bismarck), and on being called back, resumed his seat, and played two more of the later *Etudes*, winding up with a *pezzo di bravura*.

Then there was "relache." Then Dr. Gunz (accompanied either by Herr Otto Goldschmidt or Mr. Benedict) sang a German *Lied* by one Weinewurm (R.)—"Schöne Einrichtung," ("Beautiful Redress!"). Then Madame Parepa (accompanied by the composer) sang two *Lieder* by Mr. Moscheles—"Botschaft" and "Frühlingslied." Then Mr. Moscheles and Herr Otto Goldschmidt, on the piano to the left, Mr. Benedict and Mr. Charles Hallé, on the piano to the right, played a *concertant* (the composition of Herr Moscheles), for four performers on two instruments, and bearing the suggestive title of *Les Contrastes*.

Herr Peterson (from Stockholm) did what he had volunteered to do (accompanied by Herr Otto Goldschmidt on the pianoforte). Then Madame Goldschmidt sang the *bravura*, "Ma la sola," from Bellini's forgotten opera, *Beatrice di Tenda*; and then (to conclude) the overture to Cherubini's *Anacreon* was played on two pianofortes, by the forty fingers belonging to Messrs. Moscheles, Goldschmidt, Hallé, and Benedict.—*Times*.

ALFRED MELLON'S Promenade Concerts at Covent Garden Theatre follow up the opera season as usual. The *World* says of them:

These concerts proceed swimmingly. The piquant

singing of Mlle. Liebhardt; the dexterous fiddle-virtuosity of M. Wieniawski—now engaged on "classical," now on purely "exhibitive" music; the brilliant pianoforte playing of Mlle. Marie Krebs; the lively dance pieces—including Sir Hugh Baillie's "Marie" waltz, F. Godfrey's new waltz, "Helena," Mellon's "Patti" polka, &c.; the "selections"—*Africaine* (with "unison"), *Trocatore*, &c.; the overtures, marches, symphonies, &c.—on the special "nights," the splendid band; the vigorous conducting of Alfred the Great (and what not?)—combine in making up a first-class varied entertainment, and in delighting crowded audiences. We have had a "Mendelssohn night" and a "Beethoven night"—both excellent. We are promised a "Weber night" on Monday; and, as there has been a "Gounod night," and is to be a "Verdi night," we may fairly expect a "Coote night" and a "Pittman night." A "Chappell night," a "Boosey night," a "Cocks night," and a "Hopwood and Crew night," would not be bad notions.

PARIS.—Mehul's "Joseph" is under revival at the Opera Comique. The "Mignon" of M. Ambroise Thomas is to be the first novelty there.—The first novelty to be given at the Theatre Lyrique is the "Sardanapalus" of M. Victorin de Joncières—an amateur, we believe, whose music illustrative of "Hamlet" was performed in Paris a year or two since. M. Offenbach is preparing music for a grand fairy spectacle to be given at the Theatre du Chatelet during the Exhibition of 1867. "There is a question," says the *Gazette Musicale*, quoting another journal, "of a grand choral meeting to which the singers of all nations are welcome, to be held at the opening of the Exhibition. Every choral society or body of Orpheonists, whatever be its number, nature, or place of residence, may take part, and sing what best pleases it. The first prize is one of 10,000 francs." What a task for the arbiters!—MM. Fournier and Wekerlin were the artist and author selected by the manager of the Grand Opera to compose the *Cantata* performed there on the Emperor's fête day. M. Devoyod, one of the successful pupils of the *Conservatoire*, has been engaged at the same theatre.

The *Gazette Musicale* announces the discovery of a composition by Mozart at the age of ten years, produced for the installation of the Stadtholder, William of Orange the Fifth. It is in ten movements, and is written for harpsichord, stringed quartet, two hautboys, two horns, and a bassoon, and is described as very remarkable, the youth of its writer considered.

M. Georges Kastner, who has published one or two books of some curiosity and research on subjects connected with music,—among others, "The Cries of Paris,"—has just brought out one with a not very comprehensible title, "The Paremiology of Music,"—a collection of the proverbs, sayings and allusions to which the art has given occasion.

It is said that Herr Wagner is at work on an opera, the subject of which is "Frederic Barbarossa."

DRESDEN.—We are to have another *Loreley*, Herr C. A. Fischer, organist here, having just completed an opera with that well-known title. A grand concert of sacred music has been given in the Frauenkirche for the necessitous families of the Saxon soldiers who fell in the late war. It was got up by the heads of the Royal Capelle and the Theatre Royal, the executives being the members of the above two establishments, assisted by the Dresden Singacademie, and also by Dreyssig's. The programme included Organ-prelude (Herr Merkel, organist to the Court); Bach's chorale: "Gieb dich zufrieden;" Mozart's *Requiem* (soloists: Mesdes. Burde-Ney, Krebs-Michalesi, Herren Weixlstorfer and Scaria); Fugue in A minor—Bach (Herr Merkel); and the Forty-second Psalm, Mendelssohn (soloists: Mlle. Alvsleben, Hanisch, Herren Eichberger, Hollmann, Mitterwurzer, and Waixlstorfer). Mozart's *Requiem* was conducted by Dr. Rietz, and Mendelssohn's Psalm by Herr Krebs. The theatre, which was closed in consequence of the Prussian occupation, reopened on the 1st inst. The piece selected for the occasion was the *Antigone* of Sophocles, with Mendelssohn's music.

Dwight's Journal of Music.

BOSTON, SEPT. 15, 1866.

Music the Coming Season.

It is about time that Boston music-lovers should know what good music is in store for them this fall and winter. The more important, permanent sources of supply have not, however, yet announced their programmes, and the plans of the

Societies to which we look for what is best seem to be slow in taking shape. The private speculators in concert business, to whom music is more a matter of money-making than of Art, are naturally the most sharply on the look-out to seize fresh opportunities, preoccupy the halls and forestall as much eclat as possible. Thus, first in order of time, we have a lottery in the Music Hall, for the sale of certain silver ware, &c., with music for an extra bait to purchasers and to make the whole thing swim and pass off more agreeably. Such affairs are called "Gift Concerts;" they are given commonly by unmusical people, for unmusical ends; and we trust our musical artists are too jealous of their self-respect and of the dignity of their Art, to be trapped into any connection with such so-called "Concerts." Even a raffle for an Opera House, with thousands of dollars worth of paintings for smaller prizes, is not a thing to be done in the name of Art, and when it announces itself as "the grandest Art enterprise of the Century," it simply insults and degrades Art, setting up the speculator and the auctioneer as greater characters (even in the Art world) than Mozart, Raphael or Beethoven. But we do not apprehend that Boston will prove a very promising field for this sort of enterprise, on the great scale or the small. So we pass to speculations which, while they seek first the good of Number One, to-wit the impresario, are also essentially musical in their character and aim at some musical excellence.

The first visitation which we have to look for is the return of Mr. Bateman's concert troupe, which opens its second season in America here in Boston, on the 26th of this month, in the Music Hall, and remains two or three weeks. It will certainly be pleasant to hear so great a singer as Mme. PAREPA again, and to listen to the exquisite violin-playing of so pure and true an artist as CARL ROSA. Boston, if no other city, will ensure the latter a warm, appreciative welcome, and is counting on him for more of his interpretations of the highest classical music, such as he played in a concert of the Harvard Musical Society and in a chamber concert of his own. We trust the Bateman programmes will include some of these good things, and not be altogether *ad captandum* for the multitude. Depend upon it, even the multitude can be trusted hereabouts for some appreciation of the very best. We shall miss Danreuther, the pianist, who has settled down in London; but Mr. Bateman has secured the services of the excellent New York pianist Mills, whose brilliant virtuosity is not the whole of him, but who knows Beethoven and Chopin as well as Thalberg and Liszt. Levy, the cornet player, does not come; but in his place we shall have our old friend, J. L. Hatton, genial and clever pianist, singer and song composer, who will officiate as conductor and accompanist. There may be need of a "conductor," for we read of a variety of other elements which Mr. Bateman means to bring into his concerts (we hope it will not render them too miscellaneous): for instance, Signor Ferranti, a *buffo* of some note abroad; Sig. Fortuna, a *basso baritone*; the "silver-voiced tenor" Brignoli of old; besides Messrs. Hughes and Winterbottom, solo trombonist and what not. We hear nothing said of orchestra, but we may safely presume that Mr. B. will not

do less than he did last year, and will wish to give his performances the character of "grand concerts" rather than mere miscellanies of solo singing and playing. Our readers will be glad to hear that Carl Rosa has already arrived in New York.

The destruction of the New York Academy, which can hardly be rebuilt before February, renders us peculiarly exposed to "predatory" incursions of Italian Opera. All that is set down for a certainty is, that Maretzek's company (particulars in our last) will occupy the Boston Theatre from the 12th to the 25th of November. The light operas they promise will be welcome: *Zampa*; Cagnoni's *Don Bucefalo*, in which there is said to be a fine character, that of a *maestro di musica*, for Ronconi's *buffo* talent; *Crispino*, again, we suppose; but why not also *Il Barbiere*? why not some delicious thing of Mozart, say the *Seraglio* or the *Nozze di Figaro*? Other Italian combinations will be wandering about, the Strakosch company, &c., some of which may trust themselves to come and make trial here; but fortunately Boston is not so good a field as some other places for any but good opera. Since we have heard *Fidelio*, &c., by the German troupe of Mr. Grover, the Italian opera, at least such as it has averaged of late years, has lost its prestige with us. Why we should have no German opera now needs explanation. So good a success as that deserved to be cherished, strengthened and made permanent. The elements seem still to be scattered about the country and within call; we read ever and non of Frederici, Johannsen, Himmer, Hermanns, Habelmann, Anschütz and the rest, as partaking here and there in trios, pairs, or singly in some small concert enterprize: why not re-unite them and add to them till there be such a German Opera as may be always sure of welcome and support in our music-loving cities? Having that for a standard, the Verdi and Donizetti operas would not die out probably, but would fall into their rightful place; both kinds would be better appreciated by contrast.

—But we are wandering away from our purpose, which was merely to survey the field before us for the winter, and note what music we are really to have. The experiment of so-called "Parlor Opera," in the Music Hall, is soon to be tried. The parlor, to be sure, is rather large, and if the noble Hall is to turn itself into a theatre, as well as a bazaar, a lecture room, an arena for all sorts of shows, Music will soon be homeless. But the idea in itself is not a bad one. It aims to do a simple, practicable thing, which, if tastefully and well done, may give much pleasure and may develop into something worth cherishing. The design is to present, in English, with modest outlay of fit scenery, small orchestra, &c., some of those nice little operas, which require hardly more than a quartet of principal singers, without chorus; such as *Don Pasquale*, Mendelssohn's "Son and Stranger" (*Heimkehr aus der Fremde*), an early work worth knowing, Balfe's "Sleeping Queen," &c. They will begin on Thursday evening, Nov. 8, and be continued fortnightly. Mr. Peck, superintendent of the Music Hall, has charge of the business arrangements, and the season subscription, we are told, is already encouraging. Mr. Whiting, the organist, will conduct; and the singing actors will be Miss Fanny Riddell, Mrs. H. M. Smith, Mr. James Whitney, tenor, Mr. Rudolphsen and Dr. Guilmette.

Our prospect of Opera, therefore, on the whole is not large. We shall of course be "open to flying visits of various concert troupes "predatory," shoals of little fishes, so soon as the great Bateman whale is out of the way. But let us pass to what interests us all far more. Let us look to our supplies of music of the highest kind, the concerts, whether of societies or individual artists, (only not of unmusical speculators) of the kind which really give musical character to a community; the oratorios, the orchestral and classical chamber concerts.

We are sorry to see no definite promise as yet of Oratorios. The Handel and Haydn Society do not announce their plans. They will of course do the *Messiah* at Christmas time. But what else? From grand performances, as last year, with the splendid aid of Mme. Parepa, they naturally shrink, when it involves sharing the gross proceeds equally with Mr. Bateman, as if the lady's single services were a fair offset to chorus, orchestra, organ, conductor and all the other singers! But this being out of the question, are there not plenty of good things which a society so well equipped and disciplined can always do, relying on chorus and orchestra mainly, and taking the best that can be found at rates not ruinous for soli? "St. Paul," for instance, has had only one trial here yet, and that a most encouraging success. "Julias Maccabæus," the "Hymn of Praise," the "42nd Psalm" and other Psalms of Mendelssohn, and much more which they have learnt, to say nothing of more which they might learn, are things which we have a right to expect now periodically and somewhat frequently; the Society itself in its present effective condition, the Music Hall, the great Organ, the appreciative eager audience, are so many pledges that the good work shall go on. We will not doubt, then, that we shall have as much and as good Oratorio as we had last year, at least, even should it be without great solo singers. And for the first coming together of the Society for autumnal practice we commend the chorus: "Be not afraid!"

Whatever doubt there may be about Oratorio, there is none, thank Heaven (and the Harvard Musical Association!) about that which is, after all, the main and central feature of a true musical season, that which more than any other element determines the musical character of a season or a place, and on which all the music really pivots; no doubt at all about that class of concerts which is pretty sure to give the tone to all the other concerts—at least, so we cannot but read the experience of last winter—the concerts of great Orchestral music. The second series of "Symphony Concerts," initiated last year with such signal success by the Association above named, is already guaranteed by a large subscription within the circle of the Association, and arrangements are in progress, in the hands of the same efficient Committee. The general programme will soon be made public. There will be eight concerts, instead of six as before; subscription for the series \$6.00; the same afternoon hours which proved so popular, from 4 to 6, will be retained. It had been fully intended to give them also on the same day of the week. But the pre-engagement of the Music Hall, especially for Fairs covering two or three weeks at a time, seals up nearly all the Thursdays against music until the end of January. The Committee therefore are obliged to take Fridays. The loss of the prestige acquired for Thursday, our people having come to identify these concerts with that day, is something; but it is for the concerts to give the character to whatever day, and there appears to be no reason why Fridays will not answer quite as well as Thursdays. By this means the concerts can begin earlier. The first will be given

on Friday the 23d of November. Thus there will be three concerts before New Year, at regular intervals of a fortnight; then a wider interval of four weeks, making room for extra rehearsal of new things, and then five more concerts, also at fortnight intervals, except before the last, which may need extra preparation. The orchestra will be essentially the same as last year, numbering not less than 50 instruments and CARL ZERRAHN again will be conductor. No available means will be spared to strengthen and perfect the orchestra and keep up its artistic tone. The scheme of programmes is not yet arranged; but the past is guaranty enough of pure programmes and that they will prove acceptable. The general voice demands the repetition of a good share of the matter of last year's concerts, especially the interesting works then presented for the first time; and only by such repetition can time be gained for study of new things. Such Symphonies and Overtures, by such composers, as made so deep and pure an impression before; such piano-forte Concertos, by the same and perhaps some other artists; such chorus performances, only better, will be grouped with due variety and unity in each concert,—to the utter exclusion of shallow, sentimental trash and empty exhibition pieces. Of course there will be some new features of equal interest with any yet presented. We by no means despair of making the Ninth or "Choral" Symphony available for a grand finale of the series. We hope, by our next issue, to be able to announce the whole arrangement.

Besides the "Symphony Concerts," and all the more because of them, the more cheap and popular, but excellent Wednesday Afternoon Concerts of the Orchestral Union will be resumed later in the season. Such selections as they gave last winter—always a good Symphony and one or two good Overtures, with lighter miscellany for the juveniles—and with so good a little orchestra, and Zerrahn for leader, are to be counted among the fine silver opportunities, if not golden.

Our Chamber Concerts are sure to be classical in character, good in quality if not in quantity. We can only conjecture what we are to have. Mr. Schultze is said to be on his way back from Germany, so that we may look to the Mendelssohn Quintette Club for evenings of string Quartets, Quintets, Trios with piano, &c., of the usual high order; we only hope the evenings will be more than four this winter. There is reason to hope that OTTO DRESEL will give some of his exquisite concerts of piano music, having now had more than a year's rest from concert-giving. It is as good as certain that the young ERNST PERANC, who will return and settle down in Boston next month, will give concerts. So there will be no lack of opportunities to hear the best piano compositions of Bach, Beethoven, Mendelssohn, Chopin, Schumann, besides moderns like Bargiel. We are happy to learn, too, that Mr. KREISSMANN writes from Leipzig to a friend here that he will return early in November, having quite recovered his health, in spite of earlier discouraging reports, but being already tired of Germany (!) after his long experience of American citizenship and life in Boston. Mr. LEONHARD we may look for also; and so the music-lovers here will hold them good (why not?) for more such charming evenings of Bach, Chopin and Schumann, of Robert Franz and Schubert, as they gave us last year.

The great Organ we have always with us, and it is played still and will be played every Wednesday and Saturday noon and Sunday evenings, when the Music Hall is not otherwise occupied. Besides the questionable variety of things played on it to gratify the curiosity of those who go chiefly to hear the instrument put through its stops, there is always enough of Bach and Mendelssohn and Handel in the programmes, to keep alive the knowledge of true organ music.

LESSONS IN GERMAN. Knowledge of the German language is becoming quite as desirable to Americans as that of the French; to musical Americans much more so. The music and the literature of Germany are most rewarding to all students. To those of our readers who may be seeking a good German teacher, we can confidently commend Mrs. ZERRAHN, the wife of our well-known Conductor. To an intelligent familiarity with and love of the best authors of her native tongue, she unites a rare talent for teaching, inspiring others with her own enthusiasm. Those who have witnessed her capital impersonations in private German theatricals, will not wish to hear the language spoken with a purer accent.

THAYER'S LIFE OF BEETHOVEN. We give the following extracts from a letter just received from our old friend, now U. S. Consul at Trieste:

Trieste, Aug. 20th, 1866.

DEAR DWIGHT.—I catch a moment to tell you that at last (!) a volume of "Ludwig van Beethoven's Leben," by &c., &c., is in print. It makes with the preface just about 400 pages, closing with the end of Beethoven's student life and the reunion of himself and two brothers in Vienna. The reasons for printing the German translation first will be found in the prefatory letter. In one point already my course is justified, viz.: in this, that a great deal of new and excellent material has been added by my translator—matter which was not to be had when I was making my researches on the Rhine. Of course I have ordered a copy to be immediately sent to you.

By the way, from letters which I have received from Berlin, I learn that a Mrs. E. Seiler and her daughter are about emigrating to Boston. I am not personally acquainted with her, but her reputation as a teacher of singing, and the excellence of a small pamphlet by her upon the development and management of the voice, lead me to the opinion, that she will prove a very valuable addition to our corps of musical instructors. At all events, I hope she will have a fair trial and have no cause to regret the step she has taken. I understand she was connected with Helmholtz in those magnificent studies which formed the basis of his wonderful work upon the "Sensations of Tones," (*Tonempfindungen*.)

Yours as ever,

A. W. T.

MASTER COKER, the boy soprano, will return, we understand, this fall, and make a concert tour through the States. His exquisite voice, artistic singing, and fresh musical fervor have won much admiration in England. Who will not be glad to hear this rare voice again before it inevitably changes? Master Coker will be accompanied on his tour by Miss Adelaide Phillips, Mr. George Simpson, the well known tenor, Signor Strini, basso, Mr. Davies, baritone, and Mr. Edward Hoffmann, pianist.

MUSICAL CONVENTION AT KEENE, N. H. A correspondent of the Worcester *Spy* writes:—This was the fourteenth annual session of the convention, and was the best of any we have ever attended there. The conductors were Carl Zerrahn and L. O. Emerson of Boston. The orchestra was composed of the Mendelssohn Quintette Club of Boston, with the addition of a double-bass. Added to this was a splendid "Chickering Grand" and a Mason & Hamlin cabinet organ. The solo singers were Mrs. H. M. Smith, soprano; Miss Annie Carey, contralto; Mr. James Whitney, tenor; Mr. M. W. Whitney and J. F. Rudolphsen, basses, all from Boston. The music given was Rossini's "Stabat Mater," Mendelssohn's Forty-second Psalm, "As the Hart Pants," and selections from Emerson's new church book, the "Jubilate."

The convention opened on Monday, Aug. 20, and Mr. Emerson had charge, and the day and evening and a part of Tuesday was devoted to the practice of church music. By this time Mr. Zerrahn had arrived, and he commenced the rehearsals of the Psalm and Stabat Mater.

The first concert was given Wednesday night, by the Quintette Club, assisted by Mrs. Smith, Miss Carey, and Mr. Rudolphsen. It was a fine entertainment and was enjoyed by all present, we doubt not.

Thursday the usual rehearsals took place, and in the evening a second concert was given, of a miscellaneous character; the first part consisting of songs, duets, &c., and the second part consisted of the Stabat Mater. This was performed in good style, and Mr. Zerrahn deserves great praise for bringing this work out so well with so little rehearsal. Mr. Whitney sang the tenor air "Cujus Animam," in excellent taste. He possesses a pure tenor voice, his style of singing is good, and we hope to hear him in Worcester at some of your musical gatherings. "Quis est Homo" was sung by Mrs. Smith and Miss Carey; their voices blended together beautifully in this duet. Mr. Rudolphsen sang the basso solo, "Pro Peccatis" in a very finished manner. Mr. M. W. Whitney sang the solo in "Eia Mater" with much acceptance. He has established himself as a favorite in Keene; we never heard him sing better; in fact, he is the only real Basso they have in Boston. Miss Cary sang "Fac ut portem" in good taste and fine expression. The quartet "Sancta Mater" was sung uncommonly well by Mrs. Smith, Miss Carey, Mr. Whitney, tenor, and Mr. Rudolphsen; it was warmly applauded. But we think the finest specimen of quartet singing we heard was "Quando Corpus," sung without accompaniment by the same artists, with the

exception of Mr. Rudolphsen, Mr. Whitney singing the bass. The composition is exceedingly difficult to sing. The intervals are strange, and at times discordant, unless the intonation is perfect, but a most beautiful quartet it is. At the close Mr. Meisel softly played the chord of G minor, (the key in which it is written,) and found the singers were exactly on the key. They were handsomely complimented by Mr. Zerrahn. Mrs. Smith sang the solo in the "Inflammatus" in brilliant style. The choruses were well done by the large number of voices. Friday night the forty-second Psalm was given with other selections. The solo singers were well received by the people of Keene, and we doubt if a better quintet could have been secured. Mr. Zerrahn succeeds admirably in bringing out the voices and making them sing difficult music with but little rehearsal.

HERR BOGUMIL DAWISON, the greatest of German actors (Devrient perhaps excepted), and one of the greatest Shakespearian actors living, arrived in New York a few days since, in the most quiet manner, unannounced and unexpected. The war probably induced him to leave Dresden, where he has long been the reigning star of the royal theatre, though well known in all the principal theatres of Germany. He is of Bohemian origin, now well advanced in years, and recently has been pensioned off, only acting occasionally. But his announcement is always greeted with enthusiasm. He comes to our shores under no engagement, it appears; but German managers in New York are eagerly competing for his services. If we only had such dramatic companies here as he had to play with him in Germany, it would be a treat indeed (to all who understood the German language) to witness his masterly impersonations of Richard III., Hamlet, &c. We have seen him in these parts, and dare not say that we have ever witnessed greater acting. The freshness of his voice is gone, but the genius is unmistakable. It would be interesting to compare his Hamlet, and other Shakespearian characters (so far as the German version of the plays admits) with the interpretations of our admirable Edwin Booth. Dawison has the artistic sincerity so common in Germany, which puts art before self, and does not shrink from taking small parts to make the whole play good. Thus in the little partly musical, partly spoken drama of "Preciosa," with Weber's music, we have seen him play the leading gypsy to the life, greatly contributing to the exquisite whole.

PLAIDY, the veteran piano teacher in the Leipzig Conservatorium will soon emigrate, it is said, to New York.

SINGING ON COMMISSION. Novello's *Musical Times*, reviewing the past musical season in London, thus shows up one of the tricks of trade, in which, shame to say, there are too many distinguished public singers ready to connive "for a consideration":

The gradual advance of the "Ballad Concert" has been a noteworthy feature of the past musical season. That these entertainments have been mainly fostered by music-sellers there can scarcely be a doubt; but we are sorry to see artists of the highest eminence letting themselves out for hire to further the spread of such utter inanities as we have been compelled to listen to at these concerts. That the "Royalty" system is lucrative alike to vocalists and publishers cannot be questioned; but the degradation to art and artists should have some little weight with those who live by the opinion of the public. Good voices and good singing may galvanize into something like life such puerilities as "The sparrow's chirp," or "My mother's arm-chair;" but the real question is whether vocalists of established reputation would ever have travelled beyond the title pages of these effusions, had they not secured a positive interest in every copy sold. Apart from these modern manufactures, however, many of the really good songs by native composers have been resuscitated at these concerts; and although we cannot admit that Balfe's and Wallace's compositions can be classed under the head of "Old English Ballads," we are willing to allow that entertainments of this nature, with a judiciously selected programme, might do good, if only by reminding an audience that English composers have left us some music of purely home growth.

Special Notices.

DESCRIPTIVE LIST OF THE

LATEST MUSIC,

Published by Oliver Ditson & Co.

Vocal, with Piano Accompaniment.

The Hunter's Farewell. (Wer hat dich, du schöner wald). Song. *Mendelssohn*. 40

One of the set arranged from 4 part songs, and has an unusual richness in its harmonic effects. In five flats.

Autumn song. (Herbstlied). Song. *Mendelssohn*. 40

Of the same set. In E minor, changing near the end to E major. A fine song, and, like the others, has German and English words.

I love it,—that village so old. Song. *F. Abt*. 30

About a remarkable place where there "was peace and content," a fine old squire, shaven lawn, maypole, and elders sitting under a tree. Fine music.

The charming young widow I met in the train.

Comic. *W. H. Core*.

The rather green "Cove," who relates his adventures with the widow, the loss of his watch and purse, &c., in a funny way. Eight verses, and a laugh in each. Very pretty music, and easy.

I'll meet thee in the lane. S'g & Cho. *Blamphin*. 40

A very musical description of a pleasant interview in the green, moon-lit lane, from 9 to 10 o'clock, P.M. Fine illustrated title.

Ruby. I opened the leaves of a book, last night.

V. Gabriel. 30

Contains much deep feeling, and is of a high order.

Your name. Song. *T. Ryan*. 30

A queer story. Song. *Moulton*. 30

Pleasing comic song.

Instrumental.

Grand Paraphrase de Concert. *J. Ascher*, Op. 50. 65

Peculiar in some respects. Good difficult pieces increase in number very slowly, and those who play such pieces are but few. This is difficult, but not extremely so, and combines the two national airs, "Partout pour la Syrie," and "God save the Queen," in a striking manner. If you wish to make a sensation in company, without having to work too hard for it, learn this.

Ah che la morte. "Trovatore." (Crown Jewels).

Baumbach. 40

No. 1 of this fine set, and very melodious. Moderately easy.

The Battle of Sadowa.

A regular battle piece of imitative character, and one of the best that have been published since the appearance of The "Battle of Prague," which it somewhat resembles. A good piece for lessons, as the firing of the needle guns, &c., require numerous runs, and the different phases of the battle cause frequent changes of style.

Oh, dear, what can the matter be? Trans. by

B. Richards. 60

A melody which "talks" quite plainly on an instrument, and is happily chosen for transposition.

Mabel galop. *D. Godfrey*. 50

Quite brilliant and effective.

Books.

A WINTER EVENING'S ENTERTAINMENT. Social Cantata. Words by *Sydney Dyer*. Music by *A. Cull*. \$1.00

A very pleasing and genial cantata, representing an old-fashioned "quilting party," with a snow-ball scene, and various in-door amusements, enlivened by sprightly choruses, duets, and solos, in which William and Estella sing the love songs, and Jenkins and Araminta maintain the comic element. Not difficult, and as the music is good throughout, it bids fair to be very popular.

MUSIC BY MAIL.—Music is sent by mail, the expense being two cents for every four ounces, or fraction thereof. Persons at a distance will find the conveyance a saving of time and expense in obtaining supplies. Books can also be sent at double these rates.

